

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 remain pending in this application, are each independent and have each been amended herein. Support for the amendments to Claims 1-6, 9 and 10 can be found in the corresponding publication to this application (US 2004/0246320) at paragraph [0082] and Figure 13. Support for the changes to Claims 7 and 8 can be found in paragraph [0086] and Figures 13, 14A and 14B. Of course, the claims are not intended to be limited in scope to this preferred embodiment.

Initially, Applicants wish to thank the Examiner and her Primary Examiner for the courtesies extended during the personal interview of February 26, 2007. During the interview, Applicants' undersigned representative presented the claim amendments set forth herein. It was agreed during the interview that the claims as amended would overcome the rejections of record. A more detailed explanation of patentability will be discussed below.

Claims 1, 2, 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0041310 (Kaneko et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,086,197 (Kubota et al.) and U.S. Patent No. 6,494,569 (Koitaabashi et al.). Claims 3-8 were rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable over Koitaabashi et al. in view of Kaneko et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As noted during the interview, Kaneko et al. does not disclose the use of a reaction liquid, much less a particular recording duty of the reaction liquid. Although Kubota et al. and Koitabashi et al. describe a reaction solution or treatment liquid, there is no suggestion in either of these citations of applying such solution at the claimed recording duty. Previously-applied U.S. Patent No. 6,084,619 (Takemoto et al.) was also discussed during the interview. It was noted in a prior Office Action that Takemoto et al. teaches a colorant can be added to a reaction solution. However, even if one of the recording liquids in Kaneko et al. were replaced with a colored reaction solution, it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art would still not be motivated to apply the reaction liquid within the claimed recording duty.

Nevertheless, in order to expedite allowance, Applicants have amended each of the independent claims to even further distinguish the invention from the citations of record. It is respectfully submitted that none of the citations of record, whether taken individually or in combination, disclose or suggest that the pigment agglomerates migrate on the surface of the reaction liquid toward a boundary between the reaction liquid and the recording medium, and the gathering of the pigment agglomerates is formed along the surface of the reaction liquid by the migration of the pigment agglomerates, and thereby a filmy aggregate is formed on the surface of the reaction liquid, as is recited in independent Claims 1, 2, 5 and 6.

Nor do the citations of record disclose or suggest that the pigment agglomerates, which are produced by contact between the reaction liquid and the pigment

ink, migrate on the surface of the reaction liquid toward a boundary between the reaction liquid and the recording medium, and a series of the pigment agglomerates is formed along the surface of the reaction liquid by the migration of the pigment agglomerates, and thereby the filmy aggregate comprising the series of pigment agglomerates is formed on the surface of the reaction liquid, as is recited in independent Claims 3, 4, 9 and 10.

Nor would any combination of the citations of record disclose or suggest forming, on the surface of the reaction liquid, a filmy aggregate by gathering of pigment agglomerates produced by contact between the reaction liquid and the pigment ink, wherein penetration of the reaction liquid into the recording medium is completed after the filmy aggregate is formed, and thereby the filmy aggregate covering a recessed portion between fibers of the recording medium is formed, as is recited in independent Claims 7 and 8.

Thus, independent Claims 1-10 are patentable over the citations of record. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 103 rejections are respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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